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SUBJECT: GHANA ELECTIONS: WHAT MAKES PAPA RUN?

SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED

¶1. (SBU) SUMMARY. Papa Kwesi Nduom, presidential candidate for the Convention Peoples Party (CPP), has managed to offend most of the party's organizational leaders, and is running his campaign with very little support from the rank and file.

According to Ivor Greenstreet, CPP's general secretary, Nduom is running a one-man show with the aim of gaining media attention for himself more than the party, and he is ignoring the party's campaign workers at the regional and constituency levels. He does not help to campaign for the party's parliamentary candidates, and they in return are leaking information to the media that is harming his campaign. Greenstreet made little effort to hide his apathy for his flagbearer's campaign, or his indifference to Nduom's prospects. END SUMMARY

¶2. (U) On November 26, Poloff met with CPP General Secretary Ivor Greenstreet to discuss the party's campaign and prospects. Greenstreet was elected Secretary General of the CPP at the same party conference in which Papa (Paa) Kwesi Nduom was elected as the party's presidential candidate. Greenstreet became involved in CPP politics in the 1990s. His father-in-law was Jerry Rawlings' first vice president (1992-96) in a coalition government, and Greenstreet ran twice under the CPP banner in Accra for a parliamentary seat.

His wife was killed in a car accident in 1998, and Greenstreet (who was at the wheel) was paralyzed and is now wheel-chair bound.

¶3. (SBU) Poloff began the conversation by asking how Nduom managed to become the party's flagbearer when most people had assumed that the CPP's current patriarch, Agyeman Badu Akosa, would get the party nod. Greenstreet initially talked about Nduom's well-organized strategy at the party convention, but soon made it clear that by organization he meant that Nduom had bought the nomination with a methodical plan for paying delegates for their votes. Since gaining the nomination, however, Nduom has steadily alienated the party's core members by ignoring or sidelining elected party officers and setting up parallel structures using only family members and a few trusted advisors. Nduom's son has begun running the campaign in Central Region, without the knowledge or consent of the national organizer or local representatives.

¶4. (SBU) Greenstreet said that Nduom's campaign is entirely self-financed, and that money goes only to Nduom and his chief campaign strategist, David Ampofo, who receives about \$5,000 a month to keep Nduom's name and image front and center in the media. Although Nduom can't win, he hopes to establish long-term viability for himself through media recognition. What has angered party members is that Nduom doesn't care about the party, and as a consequence, the party has been unable to organize a single fund-raiser to support parliamentary candidates, whom Nduom has left to their own devices. When asked what Nduom hopes to accomplish with his third-party run at the presidency, Greenstreet pointed to Nduom's unbridled ambition and his lack of any standing with

either major party. Despite the fact that he headed up three ministries in the Kufuor government, he could not overcome his role as an outsider in the NPP, and could never have hoped to wrest the nomination from loyal party members who had been waiting patiently for decades. Thus the CPP was his only possible vehicle to promote himself, even though he does not really support the CPP's left of center political philosophy. When asked about his debate performance, which appeared to promote CPP's socialist agenda, Greenstreet said that it was "just talk. He doesn't believe a word of it, but he has to adhere to the party platform." Nduom's real goal, according to Greenstreet, is to imprint his name and image in Ghana's public consciousness, planting the seed for a political future. He also hopes that if he can gain enough votes to play a spoiler role, he may have some influence with the winning party. (NOTE: Nduom has no chance of winning the election, and by most accounts, he will likely garner no more than five per cent of the vote. In the event, however, that neither of the two major parties achieves a first-round majority, Nduom could be influential, but only if he can carry his voters to another party. END NOTE).

15. (SBU) As the campaign has progressed, the rift in the CPP has broken out into the open, and Greenstreet maintains that Nduom is now having to watch his back to avoid publicity about party disunity. The first crack was exposed two months ago, when Nduom tried to replace Freddy Blay (a popular CPP MP from Western Region who made no secret of his lack of enthusiasm for Nduom) with his own hand-picked candidate. Blay took the party to court, and won a landmark decision that determined that party candidates are chosen at the constituency level, and not the national level. Nduom

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threatened to appeal, but later backed down and tried to downplay the dispute with Blay. (NOTE: Because of his antipathy toward Nduom, Blay is openly campaigning for the NPP presidential candidate, an unpopular position that may cost him his seat. It is possible that the CPP, which currently holds three seats in Parliament, may be totally shut out this year. Samia Nkrumah, daughter of Ghana's founding father, is running on the CPP ticket in the Western Region, but entered the campaign very late and is a long shot to defeat a fairly strong NDC candidate in her constituency. END NOTE)

16. (SBU) Last week, another CPP scandal hit the media as Kwabena Bomfeh, the party's national youth organizer, went public with a letter he sent to party chairman Ladi Nylander, accusing Nduom of having made secret bargains for himself with the two major parties. He said that Nduom was lobbying with the NPP for the position of Ministry of Finance and the right to name two deputy ministers, and with the NDC for the Ministry of Local Government and a "ceasefire" on a Special Fraud Office (SFO) investigation into alleged income tax evasion as a result of Nduom's having falsely claimed U.S. citizenship after he returned to Ghana. (NOTE: Nduom lived in the United States from 1973-1991. He holds a B.A. in Economics, an M.S. in Management and a Ph.D. in Service Delivery Systems, all from the University of Wisconsin. He worked for Deloitte Touche during most of the 1980s, and came to Ghana in 1991 as a managing partner and Chairman of Deloitte's Africa office. END NOTE) When questioned about Bomfeh's accusation, Greenstreet admitted that the charges were valid, and said that he had in fact seen the letter Nduom had written to President Kufuor proposing the deal.

17. (SBU) Nduom's lack of organization and poor planning, Greenstreet said, have left the party in disarray just as the elections are coming down to the wire. He is way out ahead of the party apparatus, fending for himself, and at the same time, leaving CPP's parliamentary candidates on their own to fight for their survival. He has played the media brilliantly, and gained much momentum after a good showing in the first presidential debate, but his campaign is completely devoid of any grassroots structure. "We are non-existent on

the ground," Greenstreet said, "and without constituency and regional support, you can't translate media hype into votes."

Even worse, he added, is that discontent among party stalwarts over lack of resources has created a backlash. After an Nduom rally, he said, party members are more disheartened and demotivated than before the tour, because they feel they have been left out.

18. (SBU) COMMENT: Poloff went into this meeting expecting the CPP general secretary to hew to the party line, hoping only that he would not insult our intelligence by insisting that Nduom could actually win the election (as the candidate himself has been saying). Instead, we were treated to a totally candid assessment of a party's implosion from a high ranking insider who obviously has been off the party reservation for some time. Although Greenstreet restrained himself from open criticism of Nduom, he made it perfectly clear that he had less than zero respect for his candidate. His demeanor was more disheartened and disappointed than bitter, like someone so fed up with the course of events and feeling so powerless to change them that he had simply decided to mentally check out. Greenstreet did not say what the future held for him or his party (his salary, like all four general secretaries of parties with seats in Parliament, is paid for by a grant from the Institute for Economic Affairs). He did surmise, however, that should Nduom not rise to the level of a spoiler in the election, he would be completely out in the woods politically with nowhere to turn.
TEITELBAUM